

Animal City of Springfield  
Issues Task Force  
Recommendation #2  
**Pet Licensing**

**Purpose:** To reduce in-take and euthanasia of dogs and cats by raising return-to-owner rate for lost animals and providing spay/neuter assistance.

**Rationale:** Most animals entering the pound have no form of identification. Shelterpro database only contains animals that have entered the pound or registered pit bulls. When animal control gets a complaint concerning a pet, there is no way to look up ownership unless we have dealt with the pet previously

- *Number of strays*- 85% of the animals entering the pound are found as strays, most without any form of identification.
- *Low return to owner rate*- our current return to owner rate is only 23%.
- *Location*- our facility is difficult to find, many people do not know that the city operates a shelter and don't know to look for their lost pet there or on-line.
- *Cats are free to roam*- because there are no leash laws for cats, it can be difficult to know if a found cat belongs to someone.

**Solution:** The Animal Issues Task Force would like to recommend a pet licensing program.

- *Free ride home*- first time offenders (pets running at large) would be returned home free of charge. This saves city resources by keeping animals out of the pound.
- *Incentives to spay/neuter*- licensing fees would be lower for spayed/neutered animals; licenses could be purchased for three years at reduced rate.
- *Shortening the loop to returning lost pets*- citizens finding a lost pet can look up pet owner information on-line and make a direct connection with the pet owner, never involving animal control.
- *Rewards program*- pet owners who participate in the licensing program are offered a "rewards" card, with discounts to participating local merchants.
- *One stop shop*- licensing can be combined with the rabies vaccination at veterinarian clinics.
- *Outsource additional administrative work*- Petdata is able to handle all billing and collecting of licensing fees while maintaining an on-line database. There would be no need to hire extra staff. Pet owners can purchase the license at vet clinics, on-line or by mail.

**Budget:** Fees collected from licensing will cover the extra calls worked by animal control regarding unlicensed pets. Fees will also offset some of the cost of running the pound and providing spay/neuter for animals from the pound.